THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI HARIN PATHAK): (a) and (b) The National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) has suggested certain amendments to the Protection of Human Rights Act, 1993 for enhancement of powers of the Commission.

(c) and (d) The Government has initiated action in the matter.

Report of high powered committee on Disaster Management

1426. DR. ARUN KUMAR SARMA: Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) the salient features of the report of high powered committee on Disaster Management submitted on October, 1st 2001 and action taken on each of them so far;

(b) the details of strengthening of structures or infrastructures or instruments for disaster management done so far; and

(c) the role of National Committee on Disaster Management and details of its recommendations which are being executed and which are awaiting implementation?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI I.D. SWAMI): (a) The report of the High Powered Committee (HPC) on Disaster Management contains recommendations regarding the constitutional and legal framework, organizational structures/institutional mechanisms, mitigation and preparedness measures and response mechanisms for disasters. The important recommendations relate to suitable legislation for disaster management at the National and State levels, setting up a National Council and a separate nodal ministry for Disaster Management, establishment of a National Centre for Calamity Management and a National Institute for Disaster Management, integration of development plans with disaster mitigation strategies, setting up a network of Control Rooms and Emergency Operation Centres in National and State Centres and Headquarters of disaster prone or vulnerable districts, strengthening of organizational and institutional mechanisms at State Level, human resource development through training and awareness, preparation of Disaster Management Plans, information networking, upgrading/revamping of the fire services and the Civil Defence set up, and measures for quick response and relief in

case of natural as well as man-made disasters. The recommendations of HPC were circulated to State Governments as well as the concerned Ministries/Departments of the Government of India. The High Powered Committee was converted into a Working Group to assist the National Committee on Disaster Management. The Working Group, after taking into account the recommendations of the HPC, has finalized the Agenda for consideration of the National Committee on Disaster Management.

(b) The measures initiated by the Government for strengthening of structures and instruments for disaster management include inter-ministerial consultations on the proposal for constitution of a duly empowered National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) in the Ministry of Home Affairs with representatives from the other Ministries concerned, training and equipping of specialized search & rescue teams of Central Para Military Forces for quick intervention and support to State Governments in case of major natural and man-made disaster, earmarking and strengthening of National Level Institutions for training in specialized search and rescue, upgradation of Fire Services as multi-hazard response units, strengthening early-warning and forecasting systems, training and orientation of Government Officers, imparting basic education on disaster management at school level, formulation of earthquake and cyclone mitigation projects for States in areas prone to such disasters, development of a web-based Resource Network and issue of guidelines to State Governments on mitigation and preparedness measures.

(c) The National Committee on Disaster management had been set up to *inter-alia* deliberate on the institutional and legislative measures needed for an effective and long-term strategy to deal with national calamities. In the first meeting of the National Committee held on 18th February, 2001, it was decided that in so far as the long-term strategy for dealing with major calamities in future is concerned, a Working Group would go into these issues. The Working Group constituted for this propose held several meetings and has now finalized the Agenda for consideration by the National Committee on Disaster Management. Action has been initiated to convene a meeting of the Committee.